

## Some Facts Relating to Umatilla County's Wealth, Assessment and Taxation With Comparisons

Wealth of County Has Almost Trebled in Last Twelve Years Yet Population Shows But Slight Increase. Taxes High Yet Lower Than Average for State. By C. P. STRAIN, Assessor of Umatilla County.

There has been during the last 12 years, a tremendous increase in land values in this county and in all the Pacific coast states. Our own taxable wealth has grown from about \$17,000,000 to \$48,000,000 during this time, but our population has increased but little. Between 1900 and 1910 it rose from 18,000 to 20,000 in round numbers.

The net income from this property did not keep up with the rise in selling values. Wheat, our leading crop has not changed much in price. The

public schools are costing us over \$22 per capita for children of school age. City government is costing the people within our cities about \$2.50 per capita. Our public roads are costing the people who live outside the cities, those being the ones who pay the road tax, about \$9 per capita. The state tax last year cost about \$2.40 per capita. This year it will be about \$3.60 per capita. The average tax per capita in this county for all purposes was \$25.80

which tends in that direction may fairly be taken as a warning to big land owners, and especially so when the land is held out of use for speculative purposes.

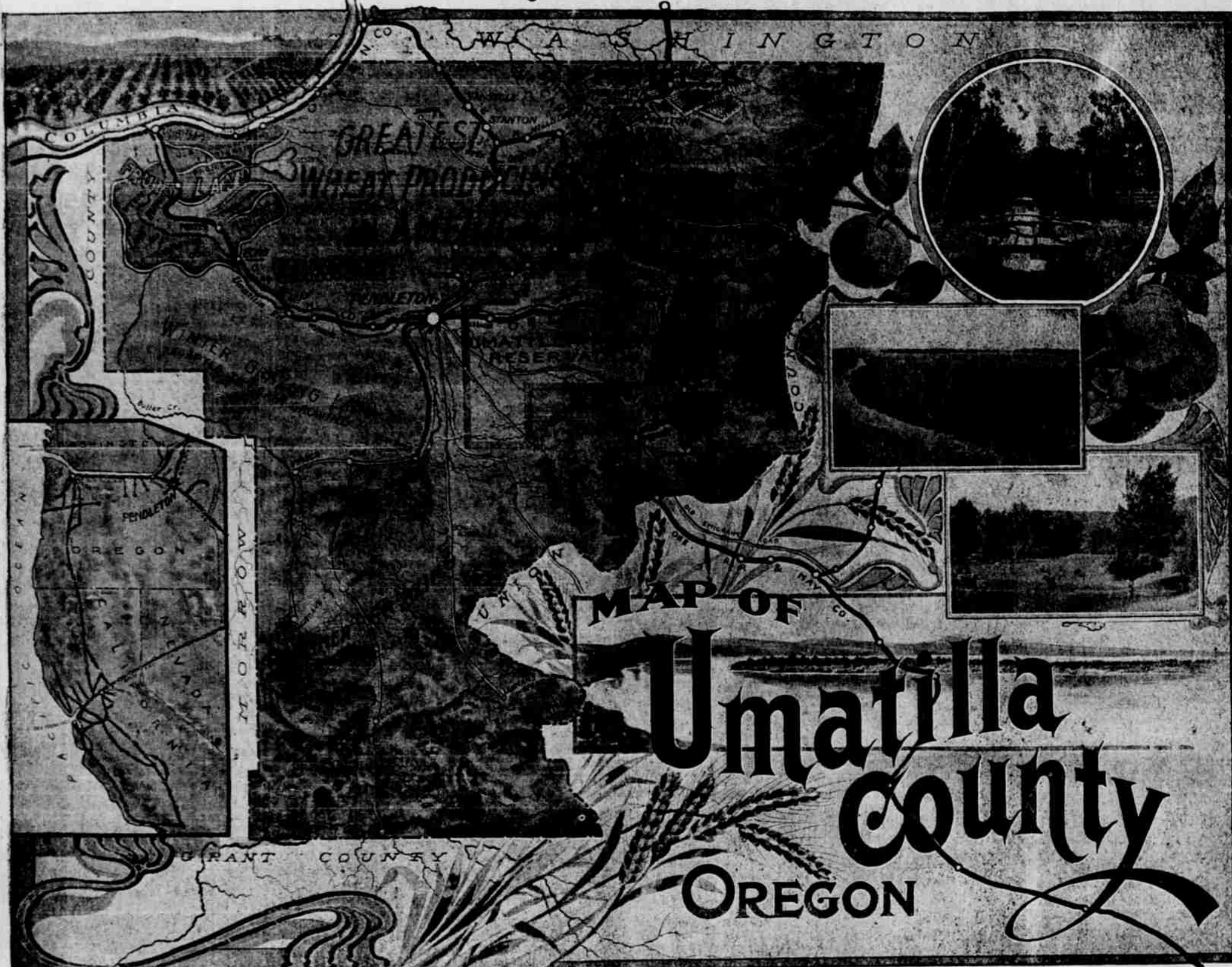
In view of the situation, as it appears to me, the tendency is toward higher and higher taxes.

These statements are made without regard to personal opinion. If they are true, the people can decide from them whether high taxes are justified and further, they indicate that investments in comparatively small

thank the gods that be that you are alive in Pendleton in the summer time.

Bracing, stimulating, animating, health-giving, red-blooded climate of Umatilla county! And Pendleton, set in the midst! The higher altitude lends a vigor to the air not found in any other part of the state. The hand that tills the soil, works the mill, directs the store, guides the pen, responds to the mind made alert by the outside freshness of the glorious climate; the step is quick-

principles. You like both the summer and the winter in Pendleton. The snow comes and adds moisture to the ground so the wheat will prosper and wax fat—likewise the wheat rancher—and the kids get a chance to slide down hill and throw snowballs, and you, more sedate, are furnished the proper amount of exercise shoveling the front walk. The air is sharp, like a knife and brings you home with an appetite fit to eat an army mule stuffed with fire-crackers. You are full of life and



This Map of Umatilla County Indicates its Varied Development

average, however, has grown, perhaps 20 per cent. Livestock has not increased much in numbers but has risen in price. Orchard products and alfalfa have made large gains.

Although our taxes in this county have increased from \$216,862 in 1903 to \$517,326 in 1913, with the probability that they will reach \$675,000 for 1914, they are lower than taxes in any other counties in the state except in Gilliam, Lake, Morrow, Sherman and Walla.

If we had paid last year at the same rate as the other counties of the state, we would have paid the sum set opposite the several counties below, respectively:

Umatilla	\$517,000
Baker	603,000
Benton	1,360,000
Chakama	784,000
Chatsop	871,000
Columbia	712,000
Coos	1,092,000
Crook	824,000
Curry	620,100
Douglas	713,000
Gilliam	489,500
Grant	608,000
Hall	567,000
Hallam	682,000
Hood River	883,000
Jackson	898,000
Klamath	845,000
Lake	470,000
Lane	861,000
Lincoln	1,015,200
Linn	673,400
Malheur	916,500
Marion	720,000
Morrow	458,000
Multnomah	849,262
Polk	870,000
Sherman	492,900
Tillamook	594,000
Tullock	577,000
Union	577,000
Walla	468,120
Wasco	679,416
Washington	731,000
Wheeler	532,000
Yamhill	818,630

If we had paid at the average rate throughout the state, we would have paid \$776,000 instead of \$517,000. In comparison with those of other counties, our tax levying bodies have been extremely conservative.

These computations are made from statistics found on page 117 of the Oregon Blue Book for 1913-1914.

The 1912 tax of \$517,000 was distributed as follows:	
State tax	\$48,000
County tax	257,000
Special school tax	144,000
City tax	68,000

last year. This year it may reach \$32.75.

The total amount appropriated by the last legislature was over \$6,000,000. This sum comprises 227 appropriations. It is too long a list to publish here. Crime, education, insanity, care of the indigent, development of our resources, boards and commissions constitute a large share of the state expense.

Widows' pensions, workmen's compensation, conservation of natural resources, regulation of public service utilities and humanitarian activities in many forms conducted through government agency, are adding from year to year to the tax budget. It is only a step to old age pensions, exemption of the poor from taxation, and to graduated taxes upon the well-to-do.

There are measures pending now covering some of these subjects, which will be on the next ballot.

The soaring tax levies are largely an expression of the growth of Socialistic tendencies. Large taxpayers, when in office, seem to support these policies as readily as non-taxpayers. If we may judge by property values this movement has not checked prosperity. There has been no general decline in productive land values, or in city real estate. Instead land values appreciated greatly.

But taxation is destined, apparently, to be made an instrument for the equalization of wealth. Through it, that half of our population without property will make themselves a secure position in society so that want will not so quickly follow illness, accident, unemployment, or other disability.

In other words, the people are turning more and more toward government as an agency for co-operative service; for restraining the unduly powerful and for protection of the weak. All this costs money and the taxpayer is called upon to foot the bill. It means that the government is becoming paternal, that is, that it is assuming a function in society similar to that of the parent in the home. In a social democracy, such as we are coming to be, paternalism is certain to eliminate large private fortunes, and its conscious supporters hope that it will abolish poverty.

It seems a justifiable prophecy to predict the elimination of large land holdings in this state within the next decade or two. The sentiment in favor of single tax expressed at the last election and the pending legislation

land holdings are safer than larger farms.

C. P. STRAIN.

**Pendleton Climate  
Far Superior to  
Apple Blossom  
Time in Normandy**

(Continued from Page 3, Sec. 1.)

er department, you might inquire of the weather prophets of which each community since the days Noah sailed the briny deep has an exclusive set. And you would learn that the snow of sixty-nix was over the fence posts on St. Ham's place and St. was unable to travel his milk route all that week because the pump had frozen up.

Whether the severe winters of the days that are gone are now a thing of the past, is a question to be debated. But one will hear old settlers say that the winters as we have them now are mild compared to the kind that used to be when they were boys. If that is so, then indeed have we of today more to be thankful for than the currency bill, the aeroplane, the telegraph, the automobile, the telephone and the other modern improvements.

Pendleton has many things which entitle it to mention among the wonders of the world but nothing so pronounced and agreeable as the climate. Here in the summer are the cool nights. If the day is warm, and the sun scorches hot along the streets, and business gets on your nerves, there is always the consolation that the night will bring refreshing breezes. And when you go to your bed, you find that your room is not a miniature edition of Milton's Paradise Lost with all the trimmings. You

ened, bounding to the call of nature's activity in every department of the outside world; and the red blood hastens through the veins, pulsating with the joy which lies in the heart; and you tell yourself that if Ajax—if that is his name—hadn't got on the job first of holding up the earth you would gladly go round and do it yourself.

The summer in Pendleton beats all the apple-blossom times in Normandy you ever heard of; or the sunsets in Italy; or the rest cures in Germany. The only safe and sane rest cure anyway is healthy work; and one can find healthy work where the air is healthy and where, when the sun comes out, it can be distinctly seen.

Enough for the summer. What about the winter? Well, the winter is a thing of beauty and a joy forever—only of course you do not want it to last forever just on general

vigor and red-blood. Besides, the chiller day is but a passing fancy almost; for winters are never severe in Pendleton.

So this is what climate means—health, wealth and ginger. You get up and go at least promptly; and you grasp a progressive idea without the necessity of it being beaten into you with a club. You are 99 per cent alive—yes, 100 per cent alive. You feel the ability to put salt on the tail of the world as it goes by. You don't sit in the chimney corner and tell how to save the country—you get out and help save, not only the country but yourself. You are cheerful. You make a smile grow where none grew before. And all these things and more do you do. And what better boon can the climate of Pendleton and Umatilla county have than this? The citizens are the indexes of the community. And environment makes the men.

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